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FLOTTING

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Floating Leaves,

—BY—

→*→* M. & D. *→*→

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A Little Story of a Little Life.

About two years ago, there came into my life a little girl not yet ten years old, a little girl (Ethel B. Fox) so much like Margaret Fuller in certain characteristics as to astonish her friends, with her suggestions of thought, and her sweet, far-reaching sympathies.

As I looked upon this dainty little creature, on that Sabbath afternoon, (sitting on her low ottoman by the side of her sick mother) and saw the delicate white face, with the large lustrous spiritual eyes and the heavy, overhanging, forehead, shaded by the soft, fine sunny hair, she reminded me of N. P. Willis' description of Vickie Greely.

As the months went on, and I knew her more intimately with the observation that *we call an acquaintance*, my first impression of her nature was strengthened; although she was a real lively

little creature—full of sport and frolic—fond to the greatest extreme of her little companions, her physical organization was constantly feeding her brain, indeed that seemed to be its only business; and I have often thought that her soul handled her delicate little physical system very much as the thought of the artist controls the pencil, or that of the mechanic the needed implements. So that it was really a sychological philosophical study to understand just how far this being of flesh and blood ministered to this soul or brain of thought, and had for the mental system returned the power and kept more, and blood and muscle in action, when from each and all, every particle of healthy life had departed.

Had one believed in the transmigration of souls, one might have thought the mind of some old philosopher had entered at birth this dainty, delicate organism, so readily did the child go to results and conclusions, or one might have thought that some spirit from Paradise had taken upon itself flesh and blood, with such intuitive perception did she see the impossible ties of human action, and the causes of human imperfection.

I remember once, as I was sitting in her presence, some one with very kind intention, related a very unkind and cruel deed in the life of a certain individual; after a moment little Ethel looked up—her great eyes so full of the infinite sympathy—and said: "Poor man! I suppose he

either did not know any better, or he had not the desire to do any better. How I pity him. Now I hope he will sometime have both the desire and the knowledge."

As I listened, I thought the child said very much as God said; but the great mystery to me was, how she came by the thought—the expression, and the sympathy, that can seldom come to any mind or heart except with the coming years. This perception and consideration seemed to reach out, and reach down through all circumstances and conditions. If a child could not wear fine clothes, she saw the *why*. If a girl or boy wasn't good, she understood the wherefore. All the little perplexities, and all the great sorrows of life were fused in this crucible of her heart and her judgement.

The pressure of the panic had weighed considerably upon her, and one day she said to me: "I am getting so fond of eggs that I am afraid I am going to be a great expense to papa. It will cost papa so much to buy me four eggs a day now, when eggs are twenty-eight cents a dozen! But papa says he and mamma have only one little girl, and she can have everything she wants. But I don't know! Do you think I better eat so many when its such hard times, too?"

After my answer, she continued, "You understand, don't you, that my dear papa has to keep all the time at work, to get me so much? He

must go to the office any way ; and sometimes mamma has to go and help too, because Willie is a boy, and Mac can't be editor and type-setter and printer, and do everything ; and mamma comes and kisses me and says, "Good-bye darling, mamma will come back, just as soon as she can ! And then I think I am wicked and selfish, because you see, if I did not have so much perhaps they would not have to work so hard ; and the paper must be kept up, or I can't have so many comforts. Did ever anybody have such a dear mamma and papa ?"

After a moment she added, "I am getting real cross, too ! Oh, I suppose so ! None but God knows how I suffer. I am ashamed sometimes, when I remember how much Jesus suffered—how patient he was. But mamma and papa know that I always mean to please." A few weeks before her departure, I found her among her pillows, writing—as she said—"a composition upon Table Manners," and said as I was sitting at her side in the twilight, just one week from the night before her death—as she reclined upon her pillows she said to me that she had not yet finished that composition ; but she should try to do so, because she thought that it was a subject of importance—a subject that few people, and especially little folks like herself seldom considered ; and she felt it a pleasure to say her *little say* about it."

But I presume she left this last literary work unfinished.

Her infantile nature was expressed in this visit by the desire to hold my watch. After turning it over and over in her wasted fingers—putting it to her ear to listen to its talk—keeping it quietly in the hollow of her hand, she gave it back to me saying :

“This watch has rested me ever so much.” Then came the sudden change from the child to the sage, or the angel—or the mysterious something—the hidden power in this little girl.

Turning her wee, wan face to the window, through which the first star-beams glistened upon her pillows, she said, “I don’t know how it is going to be to be with me this spring. The doctors have done all they can for me. Papa and mamma have done everything. Everybody is so good. Perhaps the spring—when the days get bright and warm, and the grass is green, and the winds are soft, and full of health, and the flowers are out—will bring me health? If they don’t, I shall go to the Land of a brighter Spring. To the world where dear little sister Blanche is. And I am certain I shall know her there ! Don’t you think so ?” and then, without waiting for my answer, she continued : “O yes I could not help knowing her !”

After a moment, she looked me full in the face and said with great emphasis, “My dear ——

I like a christian ! I don't like people always to think and say 'Our church, and our creed !' but 'Christ's church, and Christ's creed.' I do love a christian !" and then said, "I did not know how it was going to be with me. But I trust God. He has brought me through so far, and he will be with me to the end. I do not know what I should have done if it had not been for Jesus.

Dear little lamb ! Feeling always about her, the arms of the Good Shepherd.

And so the days wore on, until the night of the 15th of April, when she knew that the hour for great change had come ; and yet, without any allusion to death or the grave, she made arrangements for her departure ; bestowed all her little presents—taking in her hand, as the last gift, her little hat, she said, "My best of mammas, give this to my dear cousin Bell."

Wearied, she whispered "Good-night," and fell into slumber. The next day, at intervals she repeated the Lord's Prayer, and the 22d Psalm. She requested a friend to make her a wreath of flowers, and a bouquet for her hand ; and by her delicacy of spirit, and sweet religious trust lifted this last, sad scene of death and the grave into a vision of beauty and of trust.

And at the last, when the early sunrise flooded the hills and the valleys, this little child went out through the shining Gate-way, into the [eternal morning, of *the better Land*.

Floating Leaves,

—BY—

J. M. & D.



Mother's Old Pincushion.

HOW ragged and old it is ! How the soft silk has worn away, down nearly to the glass holder, leaving only the little red woolen cushion with its many needle and pin holes ! Yesterday I took it in my hands and said I would re-cover it ; but ah ! my heart failed me. Nineteen years ago mother went to sleep under the fading summer blossoms, and this little cushion stood upon her workstand, with the needles threaded for her busy fingers ; and through all the years since then it has been my right-hand friend in my hours of making and mending. No wonder it has become worn, and that it needs new silk, and new ribbon ; for the flowers have blossomed and faded many a

time since that morning, and the winters' snows have fallen again and again over the hands that clung to mine, as the soul fled away from its earthly tenement to the home of the redeemed. Yea stay yet upon the table, cushion, so soiled and worn; stay in the remains of the bright beauty in which mother's fingers dressed, a sacred memento of the past—of the beautiful days when the father and the mother kept the pleasant and the happy home and the children gathered there, sweet and pure and happy, dearer to each other than all the world beside—before sorrow had touched us, or distance had separated us; ere the cruel cares and anxieties of life had fallen over us, or misfortune had wrapped us about with his heavy mantle, or death with his relentless hand had taken our dearest and our best. Yea, stay! Every time my eyes rest upon you my fingers touch you, my heart grows whiter and tenderer, and I get nearer the loved in heaven.



Floating Leaves.

—BY—

...>M. & D.<...>



JENNIE MOORE.

Pale Jennie Moore sat by her wheel
Beside her cabin door,
And from the spindle drew the thread,
And spun it o'er and o'er.

Fair May-pinks opened at her step,
Meek daisies, white and still;
The sweet-brier lifted up its leaves,
And blossomed at the sill.

The woodbine o'er the brown old logs,
In clustering tendrils crept,
Where sunbeams nestled in the morn,
And birds at evening slept.

The river wound below the yard.
And o'er its waters clear,
The murmur of the village talk
Fell softened on the ear.

Behind the cabin, hill on hill
Rose upward in the air,
Crowned with great docks and evergreens,
And eagles nested there.

All through the spring and summertime,
And 'neath the autumn's sun,
Pale Jennie sat beside her wheel,
A singing as she spun.

And ever, ever on her lips,
Was one familiar tune,
And ever floated off these words,
Sweet as bird songs in June.

"Life must have patience, sweet and brave,
Our watch-care we must keep ;
God's guarding hand will never tire,
His love will never sleep.

How can we ask to be forgiven,
Unless we will forgive ?
It is by helping other souls,
That we too learn to live."

Through months and years sweet Jennie spun,
Through months and years she sung ;
And good folks wondered at the peace
That trembled on her tongue.

Her face was worn, as if some grief
Its early beauty cross'd,
And such a yearning in her eyes,
As though for something lost.

You would not think that one so frail
 Could toil so many hours,
You saw she needed cherishing,
 As do most precious flowers.

But when the morning meal was done,
 The dishes put away,
And Dollie in the stable fed,
 And Dobbin had his hay,

The children sent away to school
 With faces fair and sweet,
And little bare, brown, dimpled hands,
 And busy, bare, brown feet,

Did Jennie bring her little wheel
 Close to the cabin door,
And from the spindle drew the thread.
 And spun it o'er and o'er.

For Reubin in the promise failed,
 Made in this vanished youth ;
He fell away from manliness,
 From goodness, and from truth.

He loved the low, rough, drinking shops,
 The idlers on the street,
He never thought, with comfort, how
 To make the years' ends meet ;

So Jennie fed the little ones,
 And fed poor Reubin too ;
And all the more that Reubin failed,
 The more did Jennie do.

Many a cold, bleak, winter night,
She wandered o'er the moor,
Or up and down the village street,
To lead him to the door;

And one night—one bleak, fearful night,
When wild spring floods were high,
And wind and rain beat all about,
And no stars in the sky,

She wandered through the cabin rooms,
For Reubin was away,
And murmured, oh, so anxiously :
“Why does he, does he stay?”

The fire burned clear upon the hearth,
The children sweetly slept,
And Jenne, wandering out and in,
Her watch of terror kept.

'Twas midnight, and beside the fire,
Her eyes so sad and dim,
She stood, and said, “I will not go,
I've borne enough for him!”

But somehow—though in Reubin no
Beauty could she see—
Her heart looked back upon his face,
Once fair as fair could be.

And so she brought her lantern out,
And fastened on her hood,
And folding 'round her shawl, she said
She'd find him if she could.

She hurried downward through the yard,
And hastened swiftly on,
But when she came unto the stream,
Oh, woe ! the bridge was gone
An old log, wet and moss-grown lay,
The surging waters o'er,
And over it with slow, steady feet
She reached the further shore.
Then up the road-side, guided by
Her lantern's fitful gleam,
She sought for Reubin in his sin,
And led him to the stream ;
And cheerfully and brave, she said,
"Now don't you frightened be,
And Reubin don't you speak a word,
But trust yourself to me."
And when she helped him to their home,
And coaxed him to come in,
And saw how safe the children slept
Amid the storm's wild din,
And thought how she and Reubin were led
Along those dangerous ways,
She fell upon her knees and cried,
"Dear God I give thee praise."
Next morning Reubin was not well,
He said he could not go
Up to the shops ; and Jennie prayed
That God would keep him so.

* * * * *

The months went by, and other months,
And yet must Reubin wait,
But one day, he went slowly out
To mend the garden gate ;

And soon the old bars he put up,
And then the fences round ;
And finally he fell to work
A tilling of the ground.

And now all comforts come to them,
Like blessings daily sent,
Jennie would think about the shops,
But Reubin never went.

For all his words grew tenderer,
And all his ways grew mild,
And his once purple face took on
The sweet look of a child.

And Wisdom gently took his hand,
And Faith became his guide,
And Love and Mercy floated down,
And journeyed at his side.

And Jennie put the wheel away,
And she grew wondrous fair,
A golden halo seemed to float
Around her soft, brown hair.

Her eyes were like sweet violets
Wet with the morning dew ;
And you could see upon her cheeks,
The roses breaking through.

And Reuben sits at eventide
Beside the cabin door,
And holds his grandson on his knee,
And tells him o'er and o'er,
How once, a poor man, he was lost
On life's bewildering track,
And how with firm and tender hand,
Dear Grandma led him back.





Floating Leaves,

—BY—

—*—M. & D.—*



OLD SCHOOL DAYS.

THE dear old school days! Have any of us forgotten to look back at you? Have any of us forgotten how we used to both like and dislike you? You—our only source of trouble—our only hope too, of wisdom!

What tears, what trials, what quarrels! But we never can forget you. We must always remember you, from the first day when we stood, a little, mauly, piece of humanity, at our teacher's side, and tried to learn our letters. Oh, that poor teacher! experience has shown us what she must have suffered to that day, when we stood with our feet just touching the border-land of womanhood, when the skies were all golden, and the earth a valley of pearls.

And ye teachers of the days beautiful! We remember you all; from the district schoolmaster with his thread-bare coat, and the preceptress of the boarding-school with her cork-screw curls,

who insisted in having us get up at precisely six in the morning; from the Italian master, with his splendid eyes, and the little French dame, who never could sit still; up the ascending years, to the grand, good man, who gave us the last kind word in the temple of knowledge, and saw us go out, our eyes dim with the heart's sweet deed, to try the onward pathway of the years.

Ours was a hard struggle for what so many seem to gain with so little labor. The multiplication table was no easy task. Cube root was almost given up in despair; and it was deep and heavy flowing through the moods and tenses of that old grammar. How we waded through present tense, with its loves, its joys, and its blues. all at once! The past, with so many pleasant, so many sad remembrances. The future, with its sun-gilt castles builded to be only ruins. Oh, that wonderful future tense! It always brought to our mind, that musical measure in "Locksley Hall:"

“ When I dipped into the future, far as human
eye could see,
Saw the vision of the world, and all the won-
der that could be.”

Dear old school days! Our radiant present is now the memorial past; and the future into which we are dipping, and along which our vision floats, is indeed the wonder-land of unsolved, and problematical mystery. Beautiful, early days! Your

glory reaches onward, and blends with the numberless days, that make the school eternal.

Floating Leaves,

...BY...

— M. & D. —



JOHNNY AND ME.

“Please, mam, take Johnny and me,” exclaimed a little dark-eyed girl, with the hectic roses upon her cheeks, as she sat in her child’s rocking chair, in the beautiful “Home of the Friendless.” “Please, mam, do take Johnny and me!”

Bending my cool face to hers, and laying my hand upon her fevered head, I asked: “Deary, who is Johnny?” “O, that’s Johnny!” she answered, with a sweet, innocent laugh. “Don’t you know Johnny? He’s my baby brother. Nobody now but Johnny and me. Please, mam, you

said you took a little girl—a poor, little girl—for your child. Oh, mam! was she so poor as Johnny and me? We should love her so much. We could play with her too; and have good things to eat, and to wear. We could work, Johnny and me could; and we'd help you, and love you so much! Wouldn't we, Johnny?"

And the loving little creature pointed over to a corner of the room where a baby-boy of two years old, with great dreamy, blue eyes, and soft auburn curls around a thin, white face, stood leaning upon the shoulder of another sick child, sitting in a little chair.

I was not able to open a Home for little orphans and I could not take the children away with me, as little Mary clung to my dress with her small, white fingers, and cried again and again, "Please, mam, do take Johnny and me." But I knew that soon they would go to sleep among the hills, and among the dappled shadows of Elmwood, in beautiful Mount Elliott, or amid the more distant silence of Woodmore. And I wonder, to-night, do any but wild-flowers grow above their little graves? Do human hearts ever watch there? Does human love ever go there to pray? I shall never know; but I do know that Our Father finds his little ones without human word; without stone, or shrub, or blossom.

Floating Leaves.

—BY—

...> M. & D. <...>



JULIA TORNESDILL'S LESSON.

“My God! To find him here!” exclaimed a tall, black-bearded, black-eyed man, as he entered one of those bright, glittering “saloons” that open from one of the pleasant streets of a large inland town. Throwing the door wide open before him, he hurried across the room and bending over a low couch, he put his hand lightly, and with a tender touch upon the flushed forehead of a beautiful young boy, whom a careless gazer might have thought had fallen into a sweet slumber among the soft, luxuriant pillows. But this man knew that this was not “tired Nature’s sweet restorer,” although the golden curls lay about the blue-veined forehead like a flood of glory, and the sunny fringes pressed softly against cheeks, where roses were wont to bud and blossom, and the delicate lips parted to reveal the thread of

coral that they could not hide, and the arms folded, as though in rest, above the throbbing heart—yet he knew—this father—that some fiend, wearing human form, had brought this slumber upon his brave, proud boy, his beautiful first-born. As he failed to awaken with a gentle touch he turned about, and for a moment looked earnestly around him. By the side of his boy stood a small black-walnut table containing papers and periodicals; across the room were several card tables; against the walls were various lounges and easy chairs; while in numerous bright niches, and quaint little alcoves were dainty stands with porcelain glasses and large beer tumblers; large bronze chandeliers of curious workmanship, cast a flood of light around him, filling the room with a sort of shimmering brightness and sending clear, attractive rays through the crimson curtains, and through the heavy window glass, out to the passers by on the crowded street. As he stood there, with one hand upon the forehead of the wayward boy, a young man stepped behind the table in one of the bright little nooks and filling a delicate glass with a bright, foaming fluid, lifted it with his jewelled hand, and reaching it towards him, said, with a smile that was intended to win: “Very pleasant to the taste, sir. Try a drop if you please.” Without a reply, the father turned, lifted his boy in his arms, and hastened from the room. Going swiftly over the pavement, he turned

into a broad rural street where the elm trees cast their shade, and where the perfume of the lilac blooms was out upon the air. As he folded the young helpless form closer to the pitying father's heart, he murmured, "Who could have done it? Who could have been cruel enough to entice our boy into a place like that?" Then he paused, while his strong frame trembled beneath his light burden, as a voice whispered, "Ah! must you wait for this—even for yours to be slain by the tempter, before you could give heart, and word, and deed for the destruction of that fearful enemy, who is crueller than war, and deadlier than the poison of the nightshade?" As he heard, he lifted his face heavenward, and his lips moved gently, as though he had offered up a vow to be registered by angels in the Book of Life.

"How can I take him to his mother? To lose him for two long days and nights and then to find him in a sleep like this! And he only fifteen years old! My poor, dear boy! Poor, dear mother!" He had just entered the gate of the broad, beautiful yard that led to his home, uttering the words just mentioned, when a woman ran hastily to him, and reaching out her arms, exclaimed, "Oh, husband, you have found him. Is he dead?"

"No, Julia, our boy is not dead; perhaps our mourning were less bitter if he were," and as she drew near to him, with that look of terror upon her white face, and those little short sobs of grief

breaking up from her tired heart—as she drew near and wound her arms about them both—her boy and his father—he bent his head and kissed her upon her forehead, repeating the words he had so lately uttered, “Poor, dear mother.”

When they had entered the house, and laid him upon the sofa in the large, luxuriant parlor, and stood side by side, looking down upon him—upon him, their beautiful brave boy, the wife put her hand upon her husband’s arm and asked, “*Where did you find him?*”

“At Rikard’s,” was his only answer; and then they chafed the hands and bathed the forehead, and after a short time the large, blue eyes opened and immediately closed again as they looked upon the face of his father, while a flush deeper than crimson crept from his forehead to his neck, but suddenly a soft voice bore upon its trembling accents, “Mother you will not hate me?” Quickly the mother’s arms folded about him, and she cried, “Never! my precious darling, never!” and soon, the father, in a voice trembling beyond his control, asked, “My boy have you no word for me?” “Oh, father! I have brought such shame upon you, you never can forgive me!”

“My son, it would take much more than this to turn your father’s heart against you. I do, most freely forgive you.”

“Oh, father! thank you. May I never bring you such sorrow again.”

“God grant you never may, my boy.”

“Mother! mother!” exclaimed the boy, as he threw his arms around her and curled his sunny young head against her bosom, as though it was the dear old resting-place from sorrow and sin; while she drew her fingers over the fair curls, caressingly, as though he was an infant—sadly and tenderly as though he were in his coffin.

Julia Tornsdill had been a happy wife and mother. She knew no wearing toil, no anxious care. Love had led her every foot-step and filled with rainbow radiance her whole life. Her husband stood, a rock of defense between her and the world, and through him must that world strike before it could harm her. With him, she thought herself and children safe from every danger. In this bright boy she had gloried, as mothers seldom glory. In the gentle affectionateness of his nature, she saw the promise of a beautiful life, and in his great mental gifts she beheld a genius, that should yield mellow fruitage. She had kept no watch for a shadow upon his name—no thought for a sorrow upon his heart. What wonder then that her grief was sharp as it was sudden? What wonder that her spirit shrank from the unexpected burden now laid upon it?

The night deepened; the boy, clasping in his hands a hand of father and mother, fell away from his unnatural restlessness into a gentle slumber, and as they—the father and mother—watched the pleasant sleep and rejoiced so much that they

had found him, the mother said, softly and in a voice that at first was so full of regret, but finally deepened and strengthened into firm resolve, "I can see now how utterly selfish I have been. How utterly thoughtless, too. So many wandering in the downward road, and never any hand reached out to lead them back. So many drunkard's wives and children praying for comfort and for help, and never I, with a cup of cold water or a word of love! Did it need mine to show me how much I should have done? how much I must yet do? My husband let us pledge ourselves to an eternal warfare against this foe of mankind, and this destroyer of happy homes;" and the morning broke upon two hands clasped for a united labor in the Work that has the blessing of God and the love of every good heart; for the surgeon's blade had cleft only to the sweet fountains and the singing waters.





Feating



Leaves,

---BY---

M. & D.



FRIENDSHIP.

It is not a very large word, is it? But when you use it, do you ever think how much it contains? Real true friendship! how often do you find it? How many to day are ready to exclaim with Ralph Hoyt,

“And Friendship, rarest gem of earth,
(Who e’re hath found the jewel his)
Frail, fickle, false, and little worth,
Who bids for friendship as it is?”

The friendship of the world! look at it for a moment, how long does it remain? of how much value is it? how many kind words does it ever speak, when the cruel finger of slander is pointed toward us? How often does it lend a helping hand when a great financial crisis comes to us, and our earthly goods are swept away by its sea-like flood? How much compassion does it show for the poor criminal, who has perhaps

committed a forgery? In its eagerness to inflict punishment, does it ever consider the circumstances that led to such a crime? Does it ever wait and watch, to get a glimpse behind the curtains? There may have been a hungry family and no bread, no work, and no money. Sometimes however, when it does consider these things, it is only willing to cry, "No matter, he's a thief, away with him." And should there be found no cause for pardon, and the act seems to have been committed in sheer willfulness, it does not stop to consider that years ago, this sin-hardened man was only an innocent boy, who never dreamed of wrong. Did it then when the tempter came, offer any word of admonition? Alas, it was only too willing to offer greater temptation.

The friendship of popularity, what does it avail, but for a few words of flattery? Does it ever bring out the nobler spirit within us? Does it ever give us greater self respect? Yet, how we yearn for it. What efforts we put forth to gain it. How the very happiness of some seems to depend upon it, But how uncertain it is. How ready to cast us aside for a new favorite. The friendship that wealth brings, what of that, when fortune ceases to throw over us the radiance of her bright countenance?

There are some people we envy perhaps, they seem to have so many friends, but if they were told of it, we are afraid they would answer

as did the Roman philosopher, that "His acquaintances would fill a large cathedral, but a very small pulpit would hold his friends."

What was the inscription written by Byron, on the tombstone of his dog, Boatswain? We remember the last two lines.

"To mark a friend's remains, these stones arise,
I never knew but one, and here he lies."

And now we have seen of how little worth is the so called friendship of the world, we can also see how foolish it is for us to order our lives to its pleasing. How foolish to try to suit its whims, its weaknessess, and too often, its sins. We can see that the only sure, and honorable, and truly successful way is to take the truth in one's hand, and go straight forward to the right, conscientiously and affectionately building a character that the faith of the public can neither make nor mar.

There are such friends—friends who step bravely forward, and call you friend, although the whole world would hold them in derision, friends who would receive in their own hearts the arrows aimed at your's. You who chance to have such friends, ah, be careful that you appreciate them, for their friendship is indeed to be prized far above rubies, or the gold of Ophir.

Floating Leaves,

—BY—

—*—*—M. & D.—*—*

—*—

THE OLD BROWN CHURCH.

Shall we tell you about that old brown church ? How it stood down in the valley, just a mile from our little village. Why the church had not been built in the village, or the village was not built around the church no one could tell. Some thought it would be an improvement if we built a new church in the village ; but we were not very ambitious people in those days and others said the old church would last a good many years yet, and one church was enough ; so the subject was dropped, and no one thought of it afterward. But we are forgetting ourselves—we were going to tell you about the church ; how the old roof was covered with moss, and how the ivy had crept over the doors and windows, and one little vine—being of a more enterprising spirit

than the rest, had found its way through a small crevice over the old door, and began to show its green leaves, and twine itself around the ceiling, and once came very near making its way to the pulpit ; but as that was not a success, it must have concluded that it would not do to be too ambitious, for it did not continue its journey. Oh that old pulpit ! how it used to be our childish terror ; how we taxed our imaginations about its being up so high, and wondered how it could possibly be kept in its place ; how we trembled every time our good minister went up those funny little steps, and would hide our faces under Aunt Jane's drab shawl, until we were assured by his giving out the hymn that all was safe ; and he had not fallen off. And that minister, blessings on his gray hairs, there never was, nor ever can be, another such a man. Good ! why he was good all over. Every bit of him was good. His people idolized him—and in fact, no one knew him but to love him. Strangers used to tell us that it was our minister we worshipped, not our Maker. Oh ! but he is at rest now, sleeping the sleep that knows no waking, under the sod and the dew, just in the shadow of the old church, where he spent so many years in teaching of Him, who died to save the world ; in teaching his people that christianity was that beautiful spirit that leads one to pray with his closet door shut, and to love his neighbor as himself ; without talking of his

prayers or telling the dear neighbor of his love every time he met him ; and not that feeling of Phariseeism, that offers up long prayers every day in the sight of the multitude, and is continually preaching the golden rule, and when in the presence of others considers itself too good, for the foolish weak pleasures of this world ; because he thought people with the latter spirit were continually thanking God, that they were not as others were, and then how he always helped the poor, and led them gently along to better ways, by showing them that the very poorest man, who gave all he had to give, was of as much value in the sight of the Lord, as the rich man, who gave his thousands, and had plenty left. Yes, he not only taught them with words, but he did as he would have them do ; and if those he prayed for, and those he loved, were one half as good as he, when they stood on the brink of death's softly murmuring stream, they did not fail to

“See the white banners afloat on the tide,
And the dipping oars silver gleam
While the heavenly angel rowed them on,
To the green of the better shore.”

Oh ! those were pleasant Sabbaths, when we all went to the old brown church, and every one carried his dinner and staid till afternoon meeting. What a buzz till the minister went into the pulpit ! then the pleasure of eating the cold dinner, and during the short hour before service.

when some of the farmers, to the great discomfort of their wives, persisted in talking about the damp weather, and the price of wheat and oats, and farmers and miller would sit in the shade of the elm tree, just behind the church and make a bargain about farmers' corn; then the afternoon sermon, and the little girl who sat behind us and wore a blue dress, and had, O, such curls! how we used to give her rosy cheeked apples, and peppermint candies; when Aunt Jane was not looking! What would we not give for one hour of that youthful joy. As we look back upon that life now, it seems to have been but one perpetual pleasure; yet how we used to think, if we only were a man! and how we used to pout our lips, when Grandpa would put back the curls from our forehead, and say, "Your young days are your best, my boy." Well we thought, "Grandpa doesn't know;" so we excused ourselves by saying, "It's been so long since Grandpa was a boy, he has forgotten what a terrible trial it was to have mamma or Aunt Jane giving you a punch, every time you look around in church, or to have all the company ask you nothing else than 'Do you go to school, my good boy?'" When, if you had only been a man, you could have talked about farmer Jones' barley, or the minister's salary. Ah! well we have found in later years, that Grandpa came very near the truth. Yes, we have had our joys and sorrows; we are learning

to take the world as it is, not as it ought to be. We are begining to learn that little folks are just a little bit truer than the older ones. Now did we just mean that, Nelly? For in those later years we did not forget the little girl with the brown curls, and she—ah, well——

“But there’s many a man has such dreams Nelly,
In the dear May days of his youth;
When the sky nears the bright tinge of gladness,
And the world the sunshine of truth;
But too often these beautiful dreams, Nelly,
Are touched with the mildew of blight,
And the vision alone, gilds his desolate years,
Like a beautiful rainbow of light.”



Floating Leaves,

—BY—

—M. & D.—



“NOTHING TO WEAR.”

“**W**HY do I not see you at church?” I asked of a beautiful young wife and mother, a few days since.

“O, I have nothing to wear,” she answered, with such a sorrowful expression of countenance, that one not understanding her would have pited her poverty. “Nothing to wear!” I repeated after her—looking at her dress of soft garnet merino with its trimmings of velvet, and its collar of soft thread lace, and the white ruffles at the wrist—“Why not wear that dress you are now wearing?”

“It is so old, and so much out of style. Fashions change so! I want a new silk, and a splendid set of seal-skins; and I told Fred the other day, that I never would go to church again, until I had them, so that I could look as respectable as any of the ladies. And don’t you think, the dear

old soul said, that if he could possibly spare the money from his business, I should have them?"

As I looked into her bright young face, and listened to her words, my heart went back to a woman of almost royal presence; a woman of means so vast, that her wish, in regard to worldly matters, needed only to be uttered, that it might be granted—and I remembered, how, as the spring once came on, and sickness and accumulated care came with it, the Sabbath found her with no new meeting apparel. As the hour for church drew near, her little daughter asked, "Mamma, you don't go to church, do you?"

"Certainly, dear."

"Your old bonnet and dress—are they not too warm, mamma?"

"Yes, dear."

"What then, mamma?"

"My new shilling calico, and my shaker."

The child laughed, clapped her hands, and running to her sister, said, "Mamma's coming out!" then turning her happy face to her mother, she exclaimed, "You'll look real sweet though, mamma!"

When the mother came from her chamber in her shilling calico dress, and her white shaker, with its cape of brown braize, and its simple trimming of brown ribbon, and took her two little daughters by the hand, and said they were all ready now, her husband pushed the shaker back

from her soft brown hair, just far enough to leave a kiss upon her thin pale cheek, as he said, "Margaret, you look as sweet and fair as a bonny maiden," and so they went to church, while the questioning eyes of many a friend rested upon this new garb, as well as the brightening eyes of the sorrowing and virtuous poor. The next Sabbath two or three lone, needy widows, ventured in, in their plain garbs, and finally, many others who had never been able to go to church, felt that they too, if this child of affluence was not ashamed to enter, and sit with them, in her plain garments. She went away a few years ago, to her work in the heavenly country, but the good she had left behind her, the power of her beautiful influence, is still telling upon human souls, and shall go on through all the ages.

Oh, women of wealth, make your churches something more than temples of luxury and mammon! Make them so simple and so plain, that they need neither bolt nor key, and that the wayfarer, ragged and humble though he be, and the mourner and the stricken-hearted—yea, even the wandering outcast, thirsting for the balm, may at any, and at all hours, go in, and draw near to that great heart that never faileth. Go with such pure loving hearts so full of the infinite, boundless sympathy—and in garments so womanly and so unostentatious, to your house of praise and of prayer, that all the ignorant, and the suffering,

and the poor shall not fear, but shall rejoice, to come in with you, that they may find it the way and the life—even the jasper gate that opens for them upon the glories of heaven.





FLOATING LEAVES,

BY

M. & D.

CHARITY.

“NOW abideth Faith, Hope and Charity, these three, but the greatest of these is Charity.”

Do you think that half the people in this world understand what that word Charity means? Whether it means give or take? We know of some, who seem to think that it means take, or else it is stricken out of their vocabulary entirely. Others think it is that sort of thing that gets people's names in the newspaper; that builds great colleges and gives thousands of dollars for railroads, or perhaps for Opera Houses and Theaters; that it means giving elegant presents, of course to people that have plenty without them; that it means *to talk* and not *to do*, or to do great things, when you do anything.

Such people remind us of the little girl, who, during the war, raised a certain sum of money among her school-mates to send to the soldiers, she herself giving ten dollars—the others gave—some more some less, but one little girl did not give but twenty-five cents, her father was poor, he did not move in the society that was called the “upper ten” of the city, and so she gave what she had to give, but instead of being pleased to think she gave her little mite, they call her selfish and tell her that she ought to be ashamed not to do more for the poor soldiers who were fighting to save their country; and were coming home every day, sick, maimed and starving. And the rich little girl drew herself up proudly and said: “I gave ten dollars, but, *twenty-five cents*, I wouldn’t be so mean!”

Now the sequel: Going home from school that night, the little girl that gave the ten dollars, found, sitting on the marble steps of her father’s brown stone front, a poor weary looking man dressed in the uniform of a Union soldier, with a crutch by his side; touching his old blue cap, he spoke to her pleasantly, and asked if he might have a little supper, for he was so hungry and sick and had no money. What did she do, did she bid him come in to rest and eat? Not she! gathering around her, her rich cloak, and straightening herself proudly up she bade him go away—telling him that such a looking creature as he should

not sit on her father's marble steps, and she would do nothing for him. So the poor soldier went his weary way.

Now we often think of this young miss when we see people doing great things that will show, but never doing a real true deed of charity.

But let us finish our story. The soldier had not gone far before he met our little twenty-five cent girl; no need to ask alms from her before he received a bright smile. "What is the matter my poor man?" asked she, "are you sick? you look very tired," and when he had told his story, she took him by the hand and led him—not to a brown stone front, but to a place where he found pleasant words, and when they gave him of what they had to eat and drink he almost forget that he was poor and lame; then he went his way blessing our little girl for her kind acts.

Which was charity my friends? Was this the kind of charity of which we first spoke? We answer, no indeed, it was not! This was the kind of charity St. Paul ment, when he said "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angles and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass on the tinkling cymbal;" Again he says: "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing!"

I don't think he means in that verse, the charity that builds colleges and railroads! I think he

means the kind of charity, that He gave to Mary Magdalen, and to the suffering poor everywhere.

Now don't think I am saying anything against railroads and the like, because I am not, nor about those that give to them, for we need them; and it is necessary and right that men give all that they can to help us to get them. But we don't call it charity, because for these things, people receive just as much benefit as they give. But do people always, in one sense of the word, get their reward for a few kind words or pleasant smiles, even when they are like the widows mite—their earthly all? And yet this is the only spirit of true charity. So let us try and think with Paul, that “Though I could remove mountains and have not charity I am nothing.”



-3Y-



How still the night is. How bright the moon-glow. I can even hear the low, heart-filled sighs as they float across to me on the breath of the

early morning. I can see her every gesture, even the fineness of her face and its expression.

The small hours wear on, and yet, the watcher waits. Anon, the air stirs with the tidings of the third hour of the morning; when, unsteadily, over the pavement, tread the gaitered feet of a handsome youth; he pauses before the door, just under the window where the fair lady hath kept her watch. She vanishes away, but he hath seen the beautiful face, and terrible words fall from his lips as reward for the devoted love that has waited to save him; he fumbles in his pocket for a night key, but before he finds it the door falls back, the beautiful maiden stands upon the threshold; her face is full of tenderness—radiant with love; she reaches her arms toward him, and says, softly: “Hush, Brother.”

Then she discovers that he cannot stand, as he totters back and forth, and she steadies him with her girlish strength, that he may not fall over on the soft velvet of the carpet, as she continues:

“Papa threatened so, I sat up to wait for you. Come softly, so no one can hear.”

“Threatened, did he? Softly! Waiting for me, was you? There’s for your waiting.”

A wild, pleading shriek. A heavy blow upon the fair young head, and the fiend of Rum had done its cruel work.

FASHIONABLE CONSEQUENCES.

Just around the corner of one of the streets crossing Jefferson Avenue, within sound of the mellow murmur of the river waters, just as the sun rays crept over the forest, and glistened across the dimpling waves, a worn and weary mother standing alone in a softly curtained, richly adorned chamber, lifted tenderly from her throbbing heart the bright young head of her darling boy—her beautiful first-born, laid it gently upon the soft laces of the pillow, kissed again and again the wasted cheek, touched softly with her trembling, jeweled fingers, the jet black curls of hair; dropped slowly, slowly to her knees, and folding her hands over the breast of her dead idol, cried out in her agony—cried out between her low, smothered sobs: “Oh, God! Thou who dost know a mother’s heart, take into thy loving care my poor dear boy! Save my darling whom rum has ruined, and temptation brought unto death.”

Oh! ye mothers, with just such breaking hearts, hiding from agony behind crape veils and in gilded houses, let it be yours to save these boys, by purifying your social customs, and banishing from home and board, and social circle, the tempter that lives but to destroy.

FIRING UP THE TREE.

Sitting at the tea-table one evening—father, mother, and the four children—we were suddenly

startled by the report of a gun, and loud screeches of laughter in the front yard. Father ran hurriedly to the door, followed by mother with the baby in her arms, and Eddie, and Eunice, and I clinging to her skirts. And lo! the cause of our fright, was neighbor Tom, dressed in his regalia—his old brown coat minus one sleeve, his ragged knee bound about by a red bandanna handkerchief, three or four rooster's feathers in his torn and jammed high black hat.

Tom had come quietly into the yard, and sitting down under one of the large butternuts, pressed his feet against its base, and putting the mouth of his old gun against the bark between his feet, fired his gun, at the same time screeching with wild delight.

As father looked out upon him, and exclaimed, "Why, Tom, is it you? Tom, what's the trouble?"

Tom answered: "Trouble, sir? Trouble, did ye say?"

And Tom trembled all over with joy, shaking the feathers in his old hat that had fallen to the back of his head, as he continued:

"Trouble, sir! Look at there, sir!" and he pointed up, far above his head, where sat a little squirrel upon a bending bow, blinking back and forth at Tom, from his hiding place of green leaves, "Look-a-there, sir! Guess I fetched him! I fired all the way up the tree!"

Once Tom was wise and good, but rum had made him so idiotic, he did not know how to aim at a squirrel. Do you want to be like Tom, boys?

WHY IS IT?

Can you tell me why it is that we people of this world can never keep our thought in silence, and our lips from speaking guile just when the need of silence, and guileless words, is greatest? Can you tell me why we are always listening to every one's word, and watching every expression and motion? What prompts us to say wicked things just when we know they will be felt the most? Why is it that when a stranger comes into some beautiful little village, that God has made like the Garden of Eden—no matter whether his polished manner and fine cloth hint of refined society and plenty of greenbacks, or whether his honest face and home-spun garb remind us of the back woods—everybody is so curious? Why is it everybody has not only one word, but a good many words to offer? Why is it when he needs, among strangers, courtesy and friendliness more than ever before, he is left alone, to go his own ways; and unless he has breath, and strength, and moral courage enough to answer, or to ignore, the hundreds of senseless questions; and has also the power to receive without flinching, the shafts of sarcasm that are hurled at him; and endure too, quietly, and with dignity, that delightful horror—village gossip—there is no place in that Arcadia where his feet may safely stand, or his head rest in peace?

Why is it that when one who has more brains than fine clothes, is left in life's shadow, until his own brave heart has fought the way to sunshine, he is made so uncomfortable, when he emerges from the old darkness and begins to enjoy the radiance he has lighted around him? While those of fuller pockets, but empty heads and vacant hearts, lead society by a thread, and are feted and flattered and adored until they almost think that God's footstool was made for them alone; and so begin to thank their Lord and Master that they are not like other men?

Why is it, if Dame Nature blesses one of her daughters with sparkling eyes, a pleasant voice, and a foot that needs a number one boot, all the sisterhood are sure to find the voice so harsh, and declare that her little kid gaiter is just one-sixth too small; and if at a social gathering, she speak to more than one of the opposite sex, why do the maids and the mothers all cry coquette, and seem so shocked at the admiration she wins?

Why is it that when a school boy, or a school miss, explains difficult mathematical problems, they are plied with questions as to who loaned them the use of his or her brains?

Why is it that we delight to scatter our thorns, rather than our roses? Why is it that earth and no spot on it can be likened to the little "Maid's Arcadia?" Oh, why is it? Will you tell?

LOOKING FOR SANTA CLAUS.

Hark! hark! all ye peoples hear
That tinkle, tinkle, coming near!
Don't you know what that is? Say,
Don't you know, that just to-day
Old Santa Claus started from his snowy house?
Wonder will he wear a furry blouse,
Or lots of coats, and blankets too,
That snow can't freeze or tumble through?

Well, don't you know, he started out
To carry lots o' things about,
All 'round the world, everywhere? any way
Everywhere little girls and boys do stay.
'Course he couldn't go, in one day
All 'round the world; but he may
Just stop here first. Hark! now hark!
See that light through the black dark!
Hear the reindeer patter, patter!
Hear the clatter, clatter, clatter!

He's coming, sure as you live!
What do you want? What will he give?
I want a drum, sounds with a whang—
I want a gun, goes pop, pop—bang!
What do you want, say? Whew! there
He is, see! Feet, blankets, hair—
Jolly old soul! Won't hurt you nor me;
I 'aint afraid, I'll go see.

How do you do, sir? Love little boys?
Got lots pop bangs, drums, toys?
Want to produce you, 'cause
Ladies and peoples, I love good Santa Claus.

THE VIOLET.

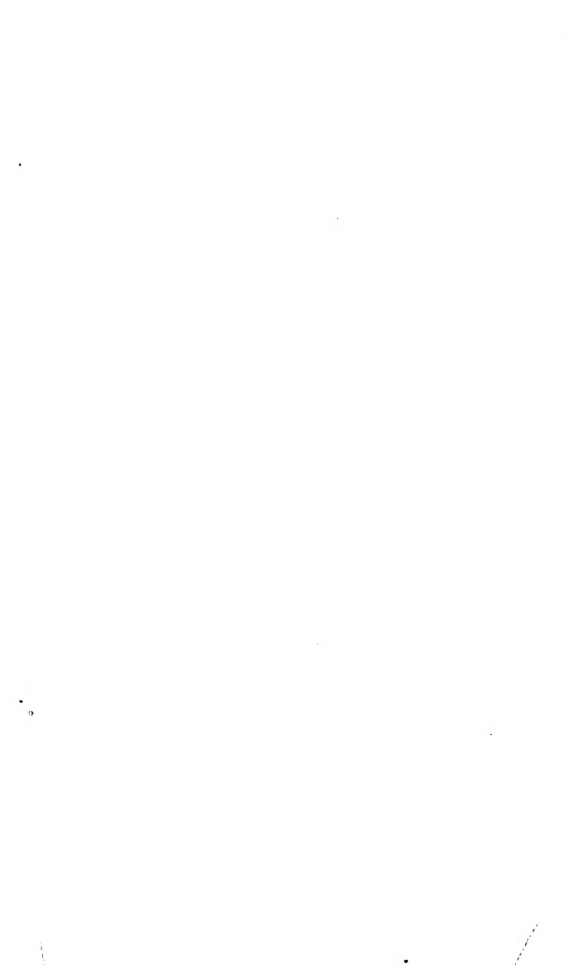
Down within a shaded dell,
Beside the old gray stone,
A little violet doth dwell,
Blue violet, alone.

“ Oh, why am I forgotten?
Why am I left alone?
Why am I left forsaken
Down by the old gray stone?
Softly doth sweet violet say,
Here have I lived for many a day
Close by the old gray stone.

“ And here shall I live,
And my sweet fragrance give,
Till the days of my pleasure be o'er,
And then, all alone
Shall I leave the gray stone,
And be buried beneath the cold snow,
And the snow-flakes shall fall,
And the children will call
Oh, the fun we may have with the beautiful snow.

“ For they will not remember
The poor little flowers
That lie dying beneath the cold snow!
But the spring time will come
With her radiant hours,
And the father's sweet heart
With its infinite grace
Will call back little violet's face,
To sit in the light of his own
In the dell, by the old gray stone.”





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